



Summary of public meetings conducted September – October 2009

The following is a summary of the six public meetings that staff from the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) conducted on behalf of the Sustainable Recreation Work Group. The purpose of the meetings was to get the public's response to the work group's draft recommendations. In addition, DNR conducted an online survey asking the same questions that were posed in the meetings. That summary is available in a separate document.

A link to the entire survey responses is posted at:

www.dnr.wa.gov/RecreationEducation/Topics/RecreationPlanning/Pages/amp_rec_sustainable_recreation.aspx

Individual meetings tone and overview

- **September 29 | Issaquah** – 14 people attended, along with Jon Kennedy* and Arlene Brooks*. This small group included many of the leaders in outdoor recreation and the conservation community.
- **September 30 | Ellensburg** – 14 people attended, along with Mary Hunt* and Elizabeth Lunney*. This group was focused more on winter recreation trail activities, which helped to provide a perspective that we hadn't heard before.
- **October 1 | Deer Park** – 7 people attended. This group was diverse, but included many business people who provided good input on the sales tax recommendation and an earful on the Recreation Vehicle excise tax.
- **October 5 | Castle Rock** – 18 people along with Rick Dahl*, Gerald Hodge* and Dave Lipinski*. In addition Rep. Ed Orcutt (Kalama) attended. It was a very informative and rich discussion.
- **October 6 | Port Angeles** – 14 people attended, along with Dale Hom*. It was a great meeting with a wide representation of user groups and ideas.
- **October 7 | Burlington** – 41 people attended—the largest meeting group. Had a range of users with very good questions and insight.

General Comments

FUNDING RELATED:

- **User fees** – Lukewarm response. On one hand, the public felt it was good to show the legislature that users were willing to pay to play, but on the other hand, they were concerned about fees being a disincentive similar to what State Parks experienced when they instituted a parking fee. In addition, they raised a concern about the economics of collecting fees. Many liked the idea of a one-pass system for the state.
- **Recreational immunity** – The public was supportive and understood the reason why the change was needed if fees were to be charged.
- **Concessionaires** – Lukewarm response at best. Concerns related to needing to have a large number of sites to make it worthwhile for a concessionaire and concern about making a profit.

* Members of the Sustainable Recreation Work Group

- **Raise the cap on the gas tax** – This was universally supported with the acknowledgement that it will be hard to sell with tight budgets. But the concept has a chance if the different user groups were to work together to lobby for it.
- **Lottery** – The reaction and discussion of the public reflected the same concern about image that work group members had expressed.
- **License tab opt-out donation** – This had a mixed reaction. Many liked the idea of accessing any extra funds to support the NOVA grant program but were skeptical and frustrated at the whole notion of opt-out.
- **Reallocation of sales tax on outdoor sporting goods** – In general people liked the concept, had some ideas on how to include 4x4s, but realized that it will be a hard sell because it would divert tax revenues from other programs.
- **Creating a new statutory trust** – Unanimous support with the realization that it would be a long-term project.
- **Excise tax on recreational vehicles** – Not well received

ACCESS RELATED:

- **Education and enforcement** – Well received
- **Unauthorized trails** – No strong reaction
- **Recreational immunity** – Well supported
- **Purchase access** – Support but concern about where the funding would come from.
- **Blocking up lands** – Well supported

Note: For more details and background related to the draft recommendations, visit:

http://www.dnr.wa.gov/Publications/amp_rec_srwg_preliminary_recommendations_09-28-09.pdf